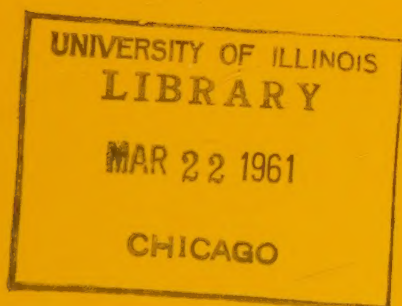


Illinois English Bulletin

Some of the Best Illinois
High School Prose of 1959



ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF
TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

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FOREWORD

Each year the *Bulletin* publishes, in separate issues, some of the best poetry and some of the best prose written by Illinois students in grades 7 through 12. Teachers should begin collecting now the manuscripts they wish to submit next year. Detailed instructions will appear in the October or November *Bulletin*. A certificate is sent to each student whose writing is printed.

Additional copies of this issue are available at twenty-five cents each from IATE, 109 English Building, Urbana, Illinois. For ten or more copies the price is twenty cents each.

For their work in selecting the prose material in this issue, the Association is indebted to Professors Ruth Bump, Charles Frank, and Ethel Seybold of the Department of English, Illinois College, who sent along the following statement:

We thoroughly enjoyed reading this year's high school prose. According to the regulations under which we worked, we feel that we should say that the selections are exactly what the title implies, some of the best Illinois high school prose of 1959. Since we were to consider entries from students in all classes of both junior and senior high school and since the selections were to be in some sense representative of writing throughout the state, we did not feel that excellence of writing could be the only consideration. It was, however, always a major consideration. We regret also the limitation of space which forced us to eliminate many entries which seemed to us genuinely worthy of publication and of honorable mention. We want to express to the high school teachers of Illinois our admiration and appreciation of the work they are doing and to the students who submitted entries the very real pleasure that we derived from reading their contributions.

EXPERIENCE OF DEATH

After the nurse closed my mother's eyelids I finally realized it was all over. My father and grandparents stood perfectly still. The doctor asked us rather hastily if we would not like to go

into the hall. How could something trivial like that make us feel better?

I remembered bitterly the promises I had been hearing during these past days:

"Your mother will be all right, Carol. She'll pull through."

"Don't worry about Barbara. A tonsillectomy is so simple!"

Trying not to be noticed by my family, I went quietly into the room where my mother lay.

Death is so intangible, I thought. My mother's death was like picking a flower or snuffing out a candle. Whatever had been there at one time was gone now. She did not fade away or anything similar. She left abruptly, as would an insulted guest.

I looked out the window. It was cold and gray outdoors, a typical January day. My surroundings seemed to mourn with me. The only things that I could think of were loneliness and oblivion. Yes, a world of oblivion. Now there was nothing left.

Bending over, I kissed her. Not a last one though. Grandmother said she would always be with me. I ran from the room and went to my father.

"Daddy, Daddy!" The tears were rolling down my face as I looked at him. "Why did Mommy die? Why did God choose to take her?"

I knew he would not answer me. How could he? He did not know himself.

CAROL STETTNER, tenth grade, Elgin H. S.
Richard F. Stettner, teacher

THIS IS CHRISTMAS

Christmas is a crowded, slushy sidewalk in Downtown Chicago. It is an enormous fir hung with glittering silver and gold balls, rising to majestic heights in perfect harmony with the towering Prudential building and the other Michigan Avenue giants. It is ribbon-wrapped, evergreen-decked street lights, like enormous candy canes guarding the entrance to Santa's domain. Christmas is a colorful, animated store window, five little elves working intently on dolls, electric freight trains, and low, sleek sleds with removable tail fins—all the newest creations from the North Pole. It is the methodical tinkling of a frail, under-padded Santa, accompanied by the "swoosh" of a revolving door and the dull roar of a passing "L." Christmas is a huge, milling throng on the first floor of Field's State Street department store. It is wet, tired feet; bulging, ripping shopping bags; and a feeling of wearied satisfaction.

Christmas is the final, agonizing week of school. It is a restless, exhilarating feeling of expectancy. It is the last, hectic, chaotic day of school, the mad rush after last class, the wonderful realization of a long reprieve from Cicero, the aorist tense, and English compositions.

Christmas is a grey, overcast sky, sharply accenting the frozen white grip of a winter night. It is the breathless cold transformed into the cascading icicles of a snow-covered roof. It is the soft, multi-colored glow of the family Christmas tree shining from the window of every home in the neighborhood.

Christmas is the recollection of a city only slightly resembling our own bustling metropolis of workers and last-minute shoppers on a modern Christmas Eve. It is a lonely stable in Bethlehem almost two-thousand years ago. It is our joyous celebration of the birthday of Christ.

EDWARD O'SHEA, eleventh grade, Quigley Preparatory
Seminary, Chicago
Rev. John P. O'Donnell, teacher

MY GRANDFATHER

When I was twelve years old, I flew from California to Kansas to stay on my grandfather's farm for the summer. My grandparents met me at the airport in their crimson, dust-covered 1949 Ford, and an hour later we arrived at the farm. As I think over it now, the whole farm was a reflection of my grandfather's personality. Grandad, that's what I called him, was five feet ten inches tall and had a slightly bulging belly. He was stocky and squarely built, but he was an amazingly spry old Dutchman. He had long, dark, grey hair which he combed straight back from his forehead. His steely blue eyes were always filled with the joy of living and shone with warmth. His ears were medium sized, but he had a large, long Roman bow nose. His face was usually clean shaven, but it had black specks of gunpowder ingrained in it from the backfire of a toy cannon. He always wore blue and white striped overalls and heavy, low-top boots except when he went into town.

Some people might have considered him old fashioned because he used horses instead of a tractor and a hand corn sheller and the kind of running water that runs only when a person pumps a bucketful and runs into the house with it. But this was my grandfather. If a machine gets the job done, why bother to find another? Although he was not extremely ambitious, he was a very

hard worker. When he thought a job should be done, he worked at it until it was done and done well. He was somewhat of a perfectionist; once he started a job he never stopped until he was satisfied he had done the best that he could. In his mind, hard work never hurt anyone. Once, when we had finished hoeing a long row of corn on a very hot July day, he said to me, "The Bible says man shall live by the sweat of his brow."

Grandad had only one physical defect; he was three-fourths deaf. To make myself heard I had to speak very loudly. I have often thought that our conversations at meals must have sounded like arguments to anyone who might be listening. Many times when he didn't hear someone he would nod his head and say, "Ya, ya," as if he had understood the person perfectly. One afternoon when he was clipping my hair on the east porch, he cut me with the clippers. I, of course, let out a scream, but he seemed to pay no attention. A few minutes later he noticed that I was bleeding, and he asked me why I hadn't said something to him about it.

He had two vices, he liked to chew gum and in the evening he always worked the crossword puzzle in the daily newspaper. Grandad had never been past the eighth grade in school, but he had a large reading vocabulary. He also had a system for adding long columns of consecutive numbers in his head. He didn't have much "book learning," but he was intelligent and had good common sense.

He knew the kinds of things boys like to have and knew how to make them. From an elderberry branch he made me a water gun and a whistle. From an old shingle he made arrows and a contraption to launch them. Perhaps it was the boy in him, but he could always keep me entertained. In the evenings he would tell me about when he was a boy and the tricks he had played. He was a jolly old Dutchman! Whenever he told a joke, he used to slap his legs and rock back and forth in his chair laughing, "Ho, ho, ho!" He usually told the same jokes, but I always laughed.

Although because of his deafness, he didn't go to church, he always seemed religious to me. He was kind and very helpful. While I was there, he helped pour the foundation to the new school house. He never smoked or drank, and I never heard him swear. He lived his life the way he thought right, and no one could make him change his mind.

JAMES HAGEMAN, twelfth grade, Urbana H. S.
Marien Seward, teacher

THE DECISION

An automobile is moving along a road at night. Its driver is looking for a motel. Suddenly, he comes to a fork in the road at which there are two signs advertising motels, one on the road to the left and one on the road to the right. What this motorist does not know is that a bridge on one road has just been washed out by a minor flood, while the other road leads safely to its motel. Although he is unaware of it, the decision that this driver makes is a decision for destruction or survival.

Man stands today at the greatest fork in the road that he has ever encountered. He has one advantage over the driver previously mentioned in that he knows which road leads to survival by peace and which to destruction by nuclear war. The signs are up; he must only realize his danger and choose the road to peaceful survival. It seems, however, as if he hesitates. He appears to be uncertain of both roads. Why?

Man recalls that war has been a panacea for many ills—social, political, and economic. It has proven the superiority of one national or racial group over another. It has brought about sweeping changes in government. It has put idle factories into production of weapons and military equipment, kept the farmer prosperous feeding the armies, and reduced the existing and potential number of hungry mouths in the world.

Man must now realize that the science of war has progressed too far. In the struggle to produce more superior weapons that kill more people more effectively, weapons have been developed that can obliterate all life upon the earth. Certainly his thousands of years of civilization have not brought man out of the jungle so that he may die.

The only logical road is the one to peace, yet what if this way is chosen? Most of the arable land in the world is now in use, yet poverty and hunger are becoming ever more prevalent. There does not seem to be enough land to grow the food to feed the booming populations the world over. It is only necessary to look at the Chinese mainland, which will soon have a population of a billion underfed people, to realize the condition into which the world will sink. Sooner or later, the unavoidable will occur; one starving nation will attack another in the hope of alleviating sore distress, and this will be the spark that will touch off a disastrous war.

Some say there is no hope; I disagree. I am thinking not of temporary scientific or political solutions, such as increased irrigation of desert lands, widespread use of birth control, or aid

from richer nations to poorer ones, but of something greater. The tirelessly working scientists, especially the missile and rocket experts, have been experimenting not only with guided missiles carrying deadly atomic warheads, but also with vehicles carrying scientific measuring devices and living things. Some day soon a man will be shot up beyond the atmosphere.

In this direction lies the glorious future of man; this is the great alternative to war. All around the earth is a universe of incredible richness. There is living space and raw materials. It needs only the invincible mind of man to find ways to colonize and tap this great wealth. The problems are numerous; but man is a pioneer, and challenges make him strong. His magnificent will can emerge victorious, and he can become second only to the Creator in mastery of the universe.

I see, then, not the fruitless destruction of the world, but the empires of the past directing man to the greatest empire of all time—the Empire of the Universe. I see space ships full of immigrants traveling at fantastic speeds to new homes at astounding distances from the earth. I see such abundance of land that all need for war will be permanently eliminated. I see the children of earth with limitless space as their dominion, and human life on the planets of every twinkling speck in the night skies.

CHARLES R. WOLF, twelfth grade, Senn H. S., Chicago
Grace A. Lindahl, teacher

A NEW UNDERSTANDING

They weren't houses; they were dilapidated stores converted into crowded dwellings. Tinny music blared from a window covered with a yellowed newspaper. From the next window emanated the harsh, rapid tones of an argument in a tongue which I did not understand. Horns blared as rattletrap cars sped through the street populated with little children who yelled and screamed as they played, unconscious of the fact that most of them wore no clothing. Thin, mangy dogs nipped at slender, flying heels. In an unclosable doorway stood a hollow-eyed mother, nursing one of the newer inhabitants of the hell-hole. The odor of spicy food came from all windows. The steamy sidewalks were littered with animal and human excrement. The stench shrouded the area.

The dictionary defines poverty as, "a deficiency in necessary properties or desirable qualities." This had meant to me the inability to have nice clothes and own a new car. It connoted living in a tiny apartment and eating hotdogs and beans. It

was a temporary state, no doubt corrected by some Cinderella situation. Not until I walked down a side street in Panama City did I understand the squalor of real, irremediable poverty.

ELLEN OLSEN, twelfth grade, Waukegan Township H. S.
Marjorie Cary, teacher

BEN WITH THE LONG-HANDLED SHOVEL

When I was four or five, there was a colored man named Ben who came around with a long-handled shovel once a month and cleaned out the sewers. We liked him because he always said, "Hello there, young gentlemen," in a grave tone of voice, and carried a red bandana in his back pocket. (Red bandanas had become a badge of glamour in our neighborhood that summer, probably because Rex Allen wore one around his neck.)

Ben always rode to work on the street department truck. The truck would stop at our corner in the cool of a summer morning, and Ben would climb down from the back and pull his shovel out behind him. Then the truck would clatter away, and Ben would be left carefully surveying the situation, and tugging on his bright red work gloves.

By then a crowd of us would be surrounding him, waiting to be acknowledged. We knew what Ben would say, and he always did: "Hello there, young gentlemen." Then he always winked and chuckled and said, "My, my! Who is ol' Ben gonna tho' down the sewer today? You *all* look like you is been particularly bad young gentlemen since the las' time ol' Ben been around here."

We always laughed, but Ben had hard work-swollen muscles bulging through his flannel shirt, and could have tossed any one of us down the sewer a dozen times without any appreciable effort. Ben would scowl and thrust his head from side to side, examining each of our faces in turn as if to discover there any telltale remains of stolen jam or cookies.

"Well . . . I suppose nobody been too *awful* bad since las' time, has dey?" We always shouted "no," and Ben would reach down for his long-handled shovel, and lean on it for a moment to deliberate. A ritual silence always fell at this point, and passing motorists must have wondered what the squat Negro was pondering on, and why we were standing so still.

But Ben would always break the silence with a wide and toothy grin, and allow that maybe nobody would have to go down the sewer right today. Then he would steady the long-handled shovel against the ground, and take its full measure with his

eyes. We would exchange nudges and knowing nods of our heads. We knew what was coming next. This was it.

First Ben would slide the heavy sewer cover over onto the parking, to expose the subterranean depths which he proposed to empty. We would shy back, suddenly very aware of the dangers attached to "going down the sewer." Then Ben would grip the long-handled shovel in both hands, and let it slide into the opening. A dull "plop" would come up from below, and then Ben would begin to haul the heavy load of leaves and mud up to the surface, hand over hand, to dump it in the gutter.

Slide-plop-hand over hand. Slide-plop . . . we knew the rhythm by heart. Soon great drops of sweat would stand out on Ben's forehead, as the sun climbed higher into the clear summer sky. The heap of mud by the curbing would lend a damp, rotting earthy smell to the corner. And the only sound would be the slide-plop, slide-plop as the long-handled shovel dug deeper and deeper.

Ben would lean dangerously over the opening, grunting with the strain as the pile of mud grew. His breath would come shorter and deeper, great dark patches of sweat would spread under his armpits, and veins would stand out stark against his temples.

We would watch, fascinated. Finally, the rhythm would slow. The steady slide-plop would scatter into a searching scrape as Ben explored the brick bottom of the basin with his shovel. And at last the shovel would come all the way out of the sewer for the last time, and Ben would slowly stoop down to slide the forged-iron cover back over the opening.

The red bandana would whip out of the pocket and be mopped vigorously over face, neck and arms. And then Ben would smile, and wink, and balance his long-handled shovel on his shoulder, and say: "Well, nice meetin' all you nice young gentlemen. Hope to see you again, sometime."

And he would slowly shuffle down the block, down to the next corner, and the next.

ROGER EBERT, twelfth grade, Urbana H. S.
Marien Seward, teacher

HATEFUL CHICKENS!

I never feed the chickens unless my mother positively insists. As I balk, she instructs me on the easy way to get eggs from under determined chickens. She actually tells me just to reach

under the chicken and get the eggs and it will not do a thing. I resolve to do this, but when I get out in the chicken house my confidence crumbles. The chickens squawk and fly right and left. They organize a group movement and loudly discuss their contempt for me. I march over to the nests and throw the hinged tops open with a sudden bang to jolt them. Usually my cowardice shows, and I gather eggs from the nests without chickens and avoid the nests that they are in. But finally, I must face them. If a chicken has a particularly weak character, I can usually stand in front of its nest and jump up and down and scream until it suddenly flurries out. But some chickens are very stubborn. The ones with their faces toward me stare at me with their beady, little eyes and just defy me even to try to get the eggs. I am afraid they could stare anything down, especially me! I leave those undisturbed. The ones with their faces away from me I cautiously sneak up on and seize their tail feathers and flip the chickens out on the floor. This usually works, but the chicken is slightly antagonized and starts fluttering around my feet and trying to peck. Soon they are all after me. I quickly leave, bearing my tales of savage chickens to Mother. I don't think she believes me; she thinks I'm merely trying to escape work.

JANET NEUMANN, tenth grade, Petersburg H. S.
Ruth W. Peterson, teacher

THE WORLD OF THE CUBE

The conception most people have of a cube is that it is the shape of a hunk of ice. This is very true. But today the word *cube* has a much more important meaning than simply describing a piece of hard water. A cube is a rare kind of person found in today's society who lives and reasons in a world of sameness of everyday life. He's an individualist. The cube is the one person in a thousand who does not fall for the mass conformity of modern civilization. He lives in a place entirely different from the outside world—the world of the cube.

Let me give you an example of the outside world. A person walks into a grocery store to buy a small box of soap, and says, "I want a small box of laundry soap." The clerk goes away for a minute and comes back with a box of soap. On the other side it says "large." "But I want a small box," the person says. "This is the small box," the clerk replies. "But it says 'large' here on the side," the flustered shopper contends. "Well the 'large' is the smallest size made," he is told. This means that in the outside

world it is impossible to buy a small box of soap, or a small anything for that matter.

In the outside world, everything has a badge. Take clothes for example. Sometime go into the section of a clothing store where they sell cheap suits. (These suits are never called "cheap," they're called "budget minded.") Look inside the collar of one of the coats. You'll find a little tag that says "Custom Brand," or "Tailor Made," or "Custom Designed." Now, just for fun, ask the salesperson, "What do you mean, 'Custom Designed'? I thought 'Custom Designed' meant designed for an individual." You'll probably be told something like, "Well, you see, these suits are custom designed for the store." This means in the outside world it is impossible to buy a standard suit. You must get one that has been custom designed.

The same thing is true with people of the outside world. It's possible to give one of these people the title of vice-president and cut his salary twenty-five per cent—and the person's elated. Now the cube can't quite figure out how come the title "vice-president" can mean more to a man than a fourth of his salary. The cube would rather have the money. But then, that's the difference between the world of the cube and the outside world.

There's a great deal of confusion about the term *progress*. For example, an announcer on television says, "Another new miracle has been wrought! Science achieves! Mankind once again progresses! The new, 1960 Shick Electric Razor has three speeds!" Now a person from the outside world listens to this and thinks, "By golly, we really are progressing." He feels great. Meanwhile a cube sits there trying to figure out what is the advantage of a razor with three speeds. All he wants to know is, "Does it cut the whiskers?" He's not quite sure there's been any progress made while wars are still going on.

The difference between the two worlds is everywhere. Take cars. Every year the cars look more like a jet airplane. People of the outside world think this is keen. A jet airplane is a beautiful, stylish thing. Why not have cars beautiful and stylish? The cube thinks this situation over. The only thing different he notices about new cars is how uncomfortably they ride, how easy it is to smash one of those fancy lights, or how hard it is to see around those massive fins. He can't see the benefits of driving a jet plane down the road. All he wants is something that will get him where he's going.

The world of the cube gets more members everyday. When a person begins to think through things and starts to ask why, he

is headed out of the outside world. When he openly challenges the thoughts of the outside world, he has entirely left it. And once he has joined the world of the cube he can never return.

ROYAL BARTRUM, University H.S., Normal
Verna Hoyman, teacher

PICTURE OF A CHINESE SAINT

On my desk sits a picture entitled "Ink Brushing of an Immortal," by Liang K'ai. It is a painting of a Taoist, done in the thirteenth century by a Zen Buddhist painter. What can I say of it? Physically, it is a very simple piece of art. The painter, using quick, yet bold strokes, has shown an old man removing his shirt. In the tradition of Eastern religion, this act is a symbol of frankness and freedom from worldly desires.

The old man is standing quite still, quietly struggling out of his shirt. This would seem to be all. The great splendor of classic beauty which we have come to expect of religious art is missing here. The man is simply a man. Although he has attained the highest spiritual enlightenment, although he is an immortal, no halo glows above his head. He is not a saint of the Renaissance. No Raphaelian angels help him to remove his earthly shirt. The old man appears, in fact, unchanged by his cathartic experience. He is simply a fat, bald, and, if the truth be known, rather undignified man. His face reminds one of a twentieth-century hobo's. He wears a ragged beard which is neither long and flowing nor white. He is bald; and his skull, with its tremendous forehead and odd shape, looks like a misshapen egg. On his face is an expression of neither joy nor pain, but the look of a fool who is constantly ridiculed.

One senses in this look a contradiction, a mystery typical of Zen. Looking at these splashings on old ricepaper, I see that in seven centuries, man has not changed much. We still live within the same universe of pain and ecstasy, and we still seek an answer to the same questions man has always asked.

JOEL HARRIS, eleventh grade, Rock Island H. S.
Carolyn Pierson Walker, teacher

A. E. HOUSMAN, *A SHROPSHIRE LAD*, POEM LXII

In Poem LXII of *A Shropshire Lad*, A. E. Housman combines the many facets of his poetic art to justify his philosophy and exemplify the best in his work. The entire poem subtly yet

forcefully asserts his conviction that poetry should not strive to "justify God's ways to man" by idealizing the world; rather it should familiarize him with the world's bitterness and hardship so that he may brave his troubles with endurance, understanding, and stoicism. At the same time, Housman maintains a light tone through the juxtaposition of humor and philosophical speculation throughout the poem; the almost farcical jesting of the first stanza turns to light-hearted irony in the second, meditative philosophy in the third, and imaginative narration in the last. Although the entire poem becomes a dramatic justification of Housman's poetry, each stanza is a complete unit of thought and emotion.

The poem is introduced with intentionally blunt, almost crude, humor as "Terence's" companion derides his poetry as "stupid stuff." His mere mention of "Terence," a Roman writer of comedies in the second century B. C., strikes an ironic note. The companion feigns ignorance of "Terence's" (Housman's) distress with the world and admits that he cannot rationalize this depression on the basis of physical discomfort ("There can't be much amiss, 'tis clear,/To see the rate you drink your beer.") The humorous use of the "cow" as the implied victim of Housman's poetry serves to emphasize its dreary and supposedly mundane quality; also, it sustains the facetiousness of the entire stanza. When the speaker further rebukes Housman for his melancholy, he employs hyperbole to extend the effect ("Pretty friendship 'tis to rhyme/ Your friends to death before their time."). In concluding his entire exhortation, he attains the same staccato rhythm which he encourages Housman to use ("Come pipe a tune to dance to, lad.").

In answering this criticism, Housman employs the rhetorical device of *reductio ad absurdum* to prove the worthlessness of poetry which merely strives to dispel the world's hardships. In the second stanza, Housman does not seek to advance his own opinions so much as to refute his companion's assertions. He dismisses those who seek a gay abandon in poetry as "fellows whom it hurts to think" and proceeds to justify his statement that liquor is a much more effective opiate than poetry. Instead of protesting against malt, ale, and beer, he admits their transitory benefits ("Then the world seemed none so bad,/ And I myself a sterling lad;") and emphasizes their facility in distorting one's environment, rendering it pleasant. Line 35 ("And down in the lovely muck I've lain") utilizes oxymoron to illustrate this distortion humorously and perceptively. At the same time, Housman stresses the annoying return to sobriety and reality which must accompany

overindulgence in drink, explaining that there can be no permanent gain or escape from one's problems. He accomplishes this by turning from a general statement ("The world, it was the old world yet,") to a specific and unpleasant detail ("I was I, my things were wet."); thus, Housman carefully follows the train of thought of one awakening from a stupor and facing reality once more. The last two lines of the stanza summarize and magnify this view.

Having disposed of his opponent's argument on behalf of light verse, Housman lays aside all pretence of humor and irony to state and justify his own philosophy of poetry. This statement, encompassing the entire third stanza, is the core of the poem. In the first six lines,

"Therefore, since the world has still
Much good, but much less good than ill,
And while the sun and moon endure
Luck's a chance but trouble's sure,
I'd face it as a wise man would,
And train for ill and not for good."

he presents his fundamental view that life is a long "fool's errand to the grave." He proceeds to extend this philosophy to poetry with the theory that serious, admittedly "sour" poetry lends a stoicism and endurance toward misfortune. In deceptively simple, epigrammatic phrases, he states that his own poetry, with its sober and melancholy attitudes toward life, "should do good to heart and head/ When your soul is in my soul's stead." He concludes by offering himself not as a pedantic philosopher but as a "friend;" at all times, he is sympathetic toward inevitable misfortune.

The final stanza serves as a narrative to illustrate Housman's contention that a familiarity with the world's evils can enable man to overcome them. Because Mithridates had "gathered all that springs to birth/ From the many-venomed earth," he was immune to the arsenic and strychnine placed in his food and drink; Housman uses this tale allegorically to justify his statement of the purpose of poetry. As he relates this narrative, he employs an abundant array of literary devices. Alliteration effectively evokes an atmosphere of stealth and deception ("And easy, smiling, seasoned sound,"). Repetition is also used for emphasis as in "with poisoned meat and poisoned drink," and in "and shook to see him drink it up,/ They shook . . ." Perhaps the predominant literary device is irony; in "seasoned sound," "when healths went round," "them it was their poison hurt," and "Mith-

ridates, he died old," it is used with subtlety, restraint, and, as a result, impact. Throughout the stanza, dramatic unity is maintained with simple, yet vivid, phraseology.

Poem LXII of *A Shropshire Lad* is characteristic of Housman's work, for just as meaning and word order are never strained for the sake of rhythm, also rhyme and rhythm are never obviated for aptness of word choice. Rather, each line is deceptively simple in structure, concise in meaning, and perfectly attuned to the rhythmical unity of the poem. Moreover, this poem is unique in envincing the broad range of Housman's style from humor to philosophy and in presenting his own justification of his work.

THOMAS MORAWETZ, twelfth grade, Oak Park
and River Forest H. S.

Helen Barclay, teacher

FROM TADPOLE THROUGH FROGHOOD

Perhaps the most fascinating animals in the world are those which either look or behave like human beings. Aside from monkeys and gorillas, the frog is the most interesting and worthwhile creature to study, in relation to the human. Indeed, there is nothing so exciting as raising a frog from a tadpole through froghood, and facing all the trials and tribulations of any parent. One will always remember when the baby outgrows his tail and gets his first and last set of limbs. Soon, with all four legs he climbs onto land and takes his first breath. Then comes that momentous occasion—his first meal as a frog.

The frogs that have been chosen for observation are very small, dainty tree-frogs about three-fourths of an inch long. If one were to look at them from above, they would appear to be almond-shaped, with several black stripes from top to bottom. Scattered spots of irregular shape lie between the stripes against the light brown color of their backsides.

These tiny creatures change colors in accordance with their environment. They can change from black, when in mud, to brown, when on soil, to light green, when near plants. It takes about an hour for a complete color change. From the outside, the mouth looks like a slit on the end of the almond, which covers about one-third of the entire body of the frog. On each side of the head there is a round membrane-covered ear, and the mouth literally extends from ear to ear. Stationed wide apart, set upon each side of the head, are two large, round, bright eyes. It has

been said that the eyes of the frog are the most beautiful eyes in the world. They are a beautiful, dark-brown amber in color, encircled by a thin, golden-yellow ring. The frog spends most of his time sitting with his long hind legs tucked at his sides and his short front legs bent inward in pigeon-toe fashion. His body rests at about a thirty degree angle with the ground, exposing a broad, white throat that pulsates constantly as he breathes in air from his blunt nose.

It seems to be the common purpose of frogs to spend all their time in a state comparable to suspended animation. A small tree frog will sit for hours on end without seeming to move a muscle other than those in his throat. When seen from the back, this frog looks like a drab pebble on the ground, but closer observation shows a slight beating of the lymph pulse at the base of its snubby tail end. Sometimes one can also detect a slight movement of the sides of the frog, as in the movement of the rib cage in human breathing, and a slight change in the moist, glistening skin as the sides rise and fall ever so slightly.

Perhaps one of the rare times the frog moves is when he is hungry and his eye is attracted by moving things. As for the frogs in many observation terrariums, they are fed by hand with the aid of a toothpick. An inch-long meal worm is cut into five pieces and one piece is placed on the end of a moist toothpick. The stickiness of the fresh cut meat is all the adhesive quality that is needed to hold the meat on the stick. The frog may smell the meat as the stick is lowered into the terrarium, but unless he sees it moving round about him, he won't even budge. When the meat is circling about him, the frog doesn't move for several seconds. Then, if the meat is placed in the air away from the frog, but not much higher than the frog from the ground, he swings his whole body around in one quick, calculated movement, sighting down his nose at the food. Slowly he tucks his hind legs in and makes a quick leap toward the end of the stick. When he lunges for the food, his whole mouth is wide open and his tongue is so short and broad that one gets only a glimpse of it as the food disappears from the toothpick. The tree-frog has favorite dishes, too, just as man does. This frog eats meal worms, fresh green gnats, and baby grasshoppers. Once, a bright green inch-worm was placed in the terrarium and gobbled up by one of the frogs, who later died of indigestion. A similar death resulted from a meal of a daddy-longlegs. After healthy meals, the frogs find it quite refreshing to hop into a cup of water and take a

good soaking. This dip serves as their after-dinner drink. Often, the reflection of the toothpick in the glass sides of the terrarium confuses the frogs and they lunge toward the glass instead of the toothpick with food.

Frogs react in different ways to different irritations. When a frog is brushed with a finger, across his throat or chest, he either puts his front legs upon the finger or tries to brush it away. When a toothpick is used to probe him, he climbs up on it, winding his small toes on all four legs around the stick, and sways back and forth to balance himself. If a small twig or feather is used to tickle his nose, he uses one foreleg at a time to brush it away in a patient but irritated manner. If he starts to get upset about anything, he will blink one eye at a time and turn his head slightly, since his short neck barely allows any head movement, and take a good look at the source of irritation. When he sees someone through the glass of the terrarium, he presses his small, pigeon-toed forefeet, with his nose between them, against the glass, and stares out with an expression like that of a little child watching the older kids play games.

There are some things which seem to attract the frogs and give them pleasure. Whenever they hear someone whistling in a high range, they get a hammish urge to sing. Sometimes, at about four in the morning, they sing their three note trill for ten seconds with three or four intervals. Then they won't make a sound for days.

The general attitude of frogs seems to be that of independence of and indifference to others of their kind. They often step all over other frogs, with no concern at all—not unlike the human animal. Like man, a healthy frog enjoys a good meal, a tasty beverage, and a little singing now and then.

DIANE WELLS, twelfth grade, Glenbrook H. S., Northbrook
William Miller, teacher

THE HILL-TOP

Mother and I had climbed for a long time up the small, twisting path that led up the hills from Pontypridd. Sometimes it would disappear in the small fern glens only to reappear a short time later after we had hunted for it.

The path was fringed with purple heather—not quite out, for the bells weren't open.

Down in the town, the chimes in the steeple rang out the hour. The echo was closed in by the wild, green hills around it, so it drifted down on the houses, on the slag heaps and mines.

The hill was very steep, and Mother was tired, so we rested awhile among the ferns and heather. And we looked down on the valley—and all Wales.

As far as the eye could see, lay the hills. It seemed that if you started walking over them you could go on until you had gone around the earth and had come back again.

And on all the hills and valleys, the sun shone down. It made dull brown sparks on the slag heaps that stood on the hills like black pyramids.

Down out of the hills from time past came the river, roaring and black. It ran through the town past the bleak miners' cottages, turning itself into eddies and out again, winding beyond the hills into time that will come.

The noises of the town came to us faintly—the roar of the river, the children's shrieks and barking of dogs, the whistle of the Cardiff train.

And if I listened very closely, I could hear the creaking shafts and the heavy breathing of the men below me working under the earth.

And if I were walking through the tunnels with them, I wouldn't feel the cold river mud around by ankles, but the fire licking the rocks under my feet.

And if I crawled on my hands and knees through the stall roads, I wouldn't feel the draft of the mine but the warmth of the stars on my head.

The wind swept down over the mountain, carrying on its back the music that my fathers sang in time gone, and the bells that have rung out for centuries over the town, over the earth.

We came down from the mountain, and something lived in me, and something died.

MARY PIERCE, tenth grade, Evanston Twp. H. S.
Ardene Stephens, teacher

THE BORDER INCIDENT

It started in the afternoon of June 11, 1949, in a little border village in Czechoslovakia. The sun was shining and the sky was blue. My sister and I were playing outside beneath the open window of our house, for Mother, earlier in the day, had told us to stay within the sound of her voice. Inside we could hear her

whispering with some of our friends. Her voice sounded strained and secretive. Suddenly, we could hear her coming toward the door, and as she opened it, we could see she was ready for a journey. In one hand she carried our coats; in the other a small suitcase. She told us it was time to go to the Prague bus that we had been planning to take for the past several weeks. The station was only a few streets away from our house. We jumped with joy at the prospect of a trip. We started walking and every few steps urged Mother to walk faster. She, however, seemed to be going slower and slower, and time after time looked back at our disappearing house. Then something happened we could not at the time understand. Our mother turned onto a road we knew led to a nearby forest. When we asked why she had done this, she answered that we still had a little time before the departure of our bus and that she wanted to pick some mushrooms for our relatives in Prague. We were satisfied with this answer and upon entering the forest we busily started hunting for mushrooms. After a while, we realized we were going deeper and deeper into the forest and that Mother didn't participate in the search. Being children, and sensing something unusual, for Mother kept telling us to be quiet all the time, we started crying that we wanted to go home. But Mother, with all kinds of promises, led us on and on. By now, we were joined by a friend, and seeing him made us feel more at ease. We were still not entirely happy, however, and kept on asking Mother why she was continuously looking around and why we were hiding behind trees and rocks every once in a while. Suddenly we saw a giant white boulder about forty yards ahead. Since there was a clearing between us and the rock, our friend instructed us that as soon as he motioned with his hand we must run and hide behind the rock. Then he crept on ahead. Soon he waved his hand toward us, and Mother, grasping us by our hands, started running toward the rock, almost dragging us behind. We crouched behind the rock for about ten minutes, sobbing and trembling with exhaustion against our Mother's shoulders.

Soon, in front of us loomed a familiar figure—a figure we had not seen for six months—a figure who we knew had escaped to Germany before the threats of the Communists he had so hated . . . the figure of our father. Now we knew we were in Germany and at the beginning, not the end, of an adventure we would never forget.

ANNA SROTYR, eleventh grade, Morton West H. S.
Elizabeth S. Hixon, teacher

DEAR MARY

I doubt if many people remember it happening now. Maybe if I keep it hidden under my bed at home long enough, I'll forget it, too.

I remember the noise of the early traffic waking me that morning last year, and how I felt disturbed and restless as I lay there reflecting on the events of the previous day . . .

Rosemary, the school yearbook, had been passed out in home-room. Everyone had one but me. It wasn't as if I'd just forgotten to order one, or was absent or something. I simply didn't have the money, and it was the same with anything else I wanted. Second-hand everything—nothing was really mine.

When I arrived at school the next day, the other kids were clustered on the stairs—in the halls—by the lockers. In groups of two's and three's and four's, they were signing each other's *Rosemarys*. A few asked me to write in theirs, but when they realized I didn't have one, it was embarrassing for all concerned. So, I tried to avoid these groups and to stay out of the way.

When I reached my P.E. class second hour, it was still the same. Everyone was talking about the yearbooks and the pictures inside. My picture was in it, of course, but I hadn't seen it yet.

Then it happened so suddenly that it was done before I knew it. I walked into the second locker room and found it empty, except for Mary Fryslie coming out and leaving her book on the bench inside. She was walking fast and didn't see me. I looked at the glossy, brown cover and the handsome, raised lettering on the front, and I knew I had to have one, too.

It was so simple. I just picked it up and put it with my school books and locked them all up in my locker.

Later, when they found it was missing, everyone searched, and I pretended to search, too. Within an hour, the incident was forgotten, except by Mary and me.

I didn't look at the *Rosemary* all day, mainly because I didn't have time. And on the way home from school I clutched it tight and pretended really hard that it was mine—mine to set on the bookshelves at home—mine to show Mom and Pop—and mine just to have.

There was no one at home when I got there. The little ones weren't back from school yet; Mom was cleaning for some woman, and Pop was at work.

So, I opened the coveted leather cover—and then closed it and cried. I cried 'til there were no tears left. You see, the so-

much desired annual was not to be mine after all. The inside was filled with messages for luck and happiness and signed by familiar names, but the messages all began, "Dear Mary."

JUDY WIKOFF, tenth grade, Urbana H. S.
Sarah Larson, teacher

PREFACE

"And created as a matter of course out of the wind
... was a bay, with a star in her forehead, the sign
of glory and good fortune . . ."

Mohammedan myth.

The spring of the year eighteen hundred and fifty eight came to Kentucky.

With peculiar boldness a tiny brown thing, with memory of the snow slicing a hoary scar on the land and the wind chewing on the swollen wounds, searched amid the dusk, begging with each thrust of its thin body.

The wind lifted, sucked, then relented; the whispering shadows went to worry the virgin budded branches. Faint faces of flowers flushed a pale cool color under evening skies. They drooped, weary from their pursuit of the sun; kissing the black earth they ran away to a road. Thin wisps of water vapor swirled in the air, then began the formation of water drops. Hanging like upside down candle flames, spitting noisily in the dust, they ran like mercury in myriads of tiny drops. Lightning quilted the sky . . . the great stormy world sobbed.

The sky relented, the earth rested; the rain dropped in soft large pocks on the hills. Wearily the foliage hung; its limbs rustled gently curled leaves. There were little sounds like drowning crickets. Rain fell faster, its cadence lost, swift, soft and sure. There was nothing but the sound dropping through the spirals of branches in the blackness.

The morn brought calm skies; the earth was too weary to receive the sun. The heaven glowed an endless void of ethereal hue. Clear crystals hung on christened boughs. The cold lifted from the earth.

A lithe black boy boldly stuck his leg over a muddy puddle, stepping onto musty straw. Immature flies buzzed noisily around screens and the wide wet circles on the floor. Though the cold was gone, no noticeable warmth came to take its place. Dark, rich, wood glistened in the pale light. Tiny pricks of moisture

clung to the long, slim, copper bands of bars that crisply marched around the tops of box stalls. A young mare nervously lifted her head, pressing her sweet oily muzzle against the bars. The boy opened the top of her stall, running his hand down her neck to where it met her delicate high wither. She waited restlessly, her ripe belly heavy on shaggy legs. Shaking herself, she shuddered and snapped at the boy's shirt.

"Here now," he jerked back, "settle down."

Suddenly she became anxious; she lashed out with an unshod hoof, limbs stiffening, teeth clamping, her lips curling back. She crumpled to the floor, knees buckling under her. Weakly she blew out her nostrils. Then the boy was there, extending his thin knotted fingers, kneading over her taut muscles. Lightly he brushed her lace lathered forelock aside. The mare snatched at his shirt when he arose and left.

Crawling around the stall, dragging her belly, grabbing at the stall manger, she pulled herself up. Aware of cramping, she glanced back at her flanks, twisting to nip away the pain in them. Leaning forward to support her weight, she arched her back; her vertebrae stuck out like beads. Rippling muscles surged around her uterus. She screamed swiftly, shortly; the pain seized. With a thin internal tear the water bag ripped; her haunches were deluged with aminotic fluid. There was an anxious silence, eerily pervaded with calm, complete and serene; the mare hesitated.

Grinding, the pain cramped her; she fell forward, rolled on her side. Sucking in she pressed the gasp against her belly. Her loins pumped; a pair of sac-inclosed forelegs thrust out. Her body bumped up; the white sac hung limp around the black, shadowy foetus. Her eyes bulged glassily; her skin tore and a thin red spurt dribbled over the milky membrane. The shadowy fetal mass wrenched its extremities and shoulders out of the mare. Her heavy uterus throbbed to expel the foal's hips. Blackness descended, close and warm; blood spilt over the foal and fetal wastes. With quivering flanks the mare felt the foal slip out. Its tiny hooves snatched away from her quarters. The sullied sac tore away from its delicate face. Blood dripped into its nostrils. Then along the narrow, silent channel in its body the muscles sucked; the blood was pulled along the channel; the spontaneous potential breath quivered in its lungs; thin cartilage sprang out away from her muzzle. The breath splashed out with blood. Its eyelids strained against each other, bound by a sticky membrane; then folded open. The great wall of light shouted against the dark

moist pupils, each like a large fresh dew drop of blood. A filly was born.

Weakly the mare leaned her neck over the foal's body, licking the sac away from the thin, wet, black outline. The filly shivered; her damp fuzzy ears started up straight out of her skull. Writhing like a seal, she bumped her muzzle into the straw. The mare lurched and scrambled up. The filly started at the sound in the straw. She felt tight, strong lips curl over her forehead; she discerned a great shadowy shape above her face. Tossing her head up, she entwined hers with the shadow's. The dark pupils were washed with fluid; she began to see lines in the shadows.

The dark boy touched her thin jaw. Making a sound in the quiet stall, the filly struggled to rise. The boy slid his hands under her rib cage, lifting her. With whimsical uncertainty she straddled, resting against her mother's deflated belly.

The mare who moments ago was one, was two—the mare and her filly. Carefully the foal reached out, nosing along the mare's belly. Firmly the boy took her lips, fitting them around the bulging nipple. Clamping her soft gums around it, she sucked, but the teat slipped away, spurting on her neck. She bumped her muzzle on the hot bag. He took her long jaws and eased them around the dripping teat. The colostrum flowed sweet, rich and yellowish down the foal's gullet. Her belly swelled inside her ribs. Weakly she straddled; dark-lashed eyelids languidly drooped over her eyes. She shivered and breathed.

The silent silver sky shone through the open door. The boy pushed it aside, leading the mare out. Great blankets of light shed over her back; thin gossamers of pale sun fled over the filly's thin body until they warmed her. She took little, unsure, mincing steps on the turf. The black boy clasped his hands.

"Now filly, try your legs, run filly, try the turf."

She gave a little jump. The colostrum converted, flowed into her muscles, spread by sheets of bloody fiber, untried. She tossed her head, making little circles with her muzzle. Snatching at the grass, the mare tore ravenously at the slender spring shoots, frequently lifting her head to watch her foal. The filly saw the waving grasses whipped by muggy winds.

"Watch filly, watch the wind," he pleaded. The filly stamped at the grass and watched it run away. Turning, she felt the wind push against her flanks. It whistled in her ear; she watched ahead. Her shoulders and flanks quivered, then she knew. With a dip, a start she struck a cadence on the turf. A swift morning zephyr whipped at her legs, swirled over her haunches, teased her slender

face. She tried to run over the surface as a green shoot thrusts through the ground. She whistled through her nose; her ears sank against her skull, making a funnel through which a tiny eddy channeled.

"Yes, yes," breathed the boy, his full pink lips slipping back. Silently the mare drew up her head, then moved like a dark cloud after the filly. The sun darted away, her brief beckon gone. The filly's legs, like arrow shafts pointed at the earth, drove into the ground. She gasped for air, lifting, opening her throat. Curling her lip, she drank the wind.

SUE KERSLAKE, twelfth grade, Roycemore Girl's School,
Evanston
Ethel S. Wanselow, teacher

WISE FOOLS

Many high school students of today are afraid. They are afraid to form their own opinions or to think independently. And in being afraid they are turning themselves into a group of disgruntled cynics.

Evidence of this fear is found in the typical modern attitude of "So what?" and "What a lousy deal." At Glenbard, as well as in other high schools, it is often the accepted thing to criticize the faculty, the school's advantages, and even the efforts of other students.

A faculty member comes under the cross-fire of malicious gossip for a single misstep, while his long hours of careful preparation and instruction are forgotten. The lunch room, the parking lot, and other advantages, which are in reality Glenbard's gifts to the students, are shrugged off with disparaging remarks. Campus Council, Student Council, the *Pinnacle* and *Glen Bard*, and other honest, sincere efforts on the part of students to make a contribution to the school and student body are met not with enthusiasm but with a sophisticated smirk and a "What-a-farce" attitude. The point has been reached where students must sometimes risk the ridicule of their friends to express approval of anything connected with school.

The key word today is "sophistication," which is only a type of false maturity. It is considered childish to seem impressed by Glenbard advantages or to condescend to take part in making or preserving them. Services that were unthought of a short time ago are now hard put to merit even a kind word.

Some students recognize the stupidity of this sophistication and rebel against it. They are often the squares, cubes, and various other geometric forms that are being raked over the coals by the more liberal-minded wise guys. But the squares are a large factor in preventing today's students from becoming a race of immature fault-finders.

The "modern attitude" can well be thought of as a disease. An injection of appreciation and independent thinking might well be the shot in the arm needed to cure the fear in high school students of today.

DAVID WINGE, twelfth grade, Glenbard West H. S.,
Glen Ellyn
Helen McConnell, teacher

THREE DAYS TO SEE

If I knew that in three days my sight would be gone, I would forget everything but my will to see. If I could choose the time of the three days that would be left to me, it would be now, in October. For me, the fall contains more glorious color and ever-changing beauty than any other season. I would not let anyone know my tragedy, because I would not want all the sympathy and pity that would be showered on me. Instead, I would want to be with people and be able to watch them without their knowing anything was amiss. I would like to go to a dance one night and see the gaiety and festivity that young people's faces portray. I would watch lithe bodies sway and swing energetically to the lively strains of music. Then, when I went out into the crisp, fresh night, I would see the streetlights shining on wet streets, the clouds scudding before an almost-full moon, the quiet gleam of waiting, empty cars.

The second night I would go to a hayride. My eyes would drink in the sight of golden straw stacked on the wagons, the different colors and textures of sweaters and slacks, a boy's rough hand holding a girl's smaller, dainty one. On the ride I would watch the cornfield rustle gently as we crawled by, the shadowy shapes in the wagons. I would lean back and try to memorize the sky with its brilliant masses of stars, and the harvest moon riding low and red like a pumpkin in the sky. When we returned from the ride, there would be the bonfire to watch, burning large and warm with its stacked logs. Hands would grab frankfurters and long sharpened sticks would be employed to hold them and white fluffy marshmallows in the fire until done. Never again would I

be able to answer the merrily shouted question, "Where's the bottle opener?" because I would not see it.

During the days I would drive unceasingly through our Illinois countryside, but what I would see I cannot express. Mere words do not paint the picture of russet, gold, brown, red streaks, shapes, blotches of glorious color—here a whole forest, there a hillside, there a single tree of flaming glory. And then to this magnificence I must add the thought—"Never to see it again."

My last night I would go to my Church, alone, for only here would I be able to find the solace I needed. In the hushed, reverent calm, I would see the soft lights on stained glass, gleaming silver, dark, polished wood, rich red velvet. For the last time I would read the words of the old hymns and beloved scriptures. Sitting there in the quiet, I would meditate. My thoughts would wander over a thousand things: Snowdrifts, white against whiter; gleaming fairy ornaments on dark pine green; dripping tinsel, gay massed packages, golden, fresh-baked cookies; morning sun on ice-wrapped countryside; spring green touching palely the bare branches; daffodils, a baby's smile, golden curls; white cotton clouds in a deep blue sky, water in a swimming pool; kittens, puppies, diamonds, satin. See a lifetime in three days? My despair would overwhelm me, and, flinging myself on my knees, I would cry aloud to God for the strength I needed—and He, who made all, would grant it to me.

ANNE RAWLINGS, twelfth grade, Harris H. S., Petersburg
Mina Terry, teacher

SOME DIVINE DESPAIR

Only on the underside of the tangled shell of trees was there any cool. Danny's head had stopped throbbing from the heat, but there were still patches of dark floating before his eyes from the sun's glare. Where he had come from, across a scorched field, an aproned woman shimmered on a porch, shouting to a small girl. Her gestures were far away and doll-like. Danny stiffened guiltily for a moment but then smiled with his mouth, thinking that she was so small that he could bend her to nothing in his hand. There was pity, too, in his smile. "Pity the dead," he thought idly and wondered how such an image had come to his mind.

He did not know why he came here, ever. It was someplace to go. Where he lay, the brown scrub arched and pricked under his body, taking its shape from his own. His movements startled gnats which blew gustily about his head. Sometimes when he lay

this way with his eyes closed, Danny felt as if he were running, pushing, moving and building things out of words. There was always a surge of regret and the unsettled sensation of falling when he rediscovered his damp body in its old place. If it would only rain, or if the earth should tremble wrathfully, he might have a reason to run, to find his way back to the dark house; but it never rained through the shield of the trees. His futility was a great empty despair to Danny, for he was only seventeen and every sensation echoed in the distorted cave of his youth until it pushed against his eyes and mouth, and he wept into the dark grass. He wept now, for the woman on the porch, using her as a reason for feeling.

"You're crying, Danny," said the small girl. Danny saw that her face was grimy and that she had gathered a careless bunch of wilting dandelions in her trip across the field. Because of the moving tree-shadows on the grass and over her hair and body, she had the look of a wild undersea creature. Her stirring life made the hollow a great pulsing heart of expanding leaves and wind.

"You are the dark woman of the sonnets," said Danny in reply. His mournful face was solemn and cool once more. The child's mouth twisted in wonderment.

"Mommy's a woman," she said decisively.

"No she isn't. Whoever told you that is wrong. Why, you're the only real woman I know."

"Mommy said not to listen to you. You're going through a face." She was twisting the golden tops of the flowers into the dust.

"Of course," Danny said, clawing the ground with his hand, "I become a vampire in the last quarter of the moon."

"Oh." She spoke wisely and without surprise. "Anyway, you have to come and cut the grass and dinner will be in twenty minutes and move your poetry books out of the yard flowers. That's all she said."

"A book of verses and a loaf of bread," Danny remarked, sorry that no slob from *Time* was listening and at the same time glad that it was only the little girl with the shadows. He got up, moving his body carefully.

"You've got grass marks all over your shirt," said the child. "Mommy will kill you. Remember last time?"

"You're no doll yourself, Pretzel. You're carrying more dirt than a mummy."

They began to walk back in the same direction, though keeping several feet apart all the way.

MARY ANN RADNER, twelfth grade, Evanston Twp. H. S.
Barbara Pannwitt, teacher

THE INTRUDER

The colored gym matron shook her head at the sight of the girls' locker room floor, littered with hastily discarded skirts, blouses, shoes, socks and books.

She leaned her scrub bucket and mop against a locker door, wiped her dark hands on the sides of her faded print dress, and with a labored sigh, stooped down and began to pick up the clothes that scattered the floor.

"Will these white children ever learn to pick up their clothes?" she asked herself.

The matron had begun working at Jefferson Davis High a few years after she quit attending school there. It seemed as if years of working in the locker room separated her high school days from the present. In reality, it was only ten years.

After going from employment agency to employment agency, looking for secretarial work, she applied for a job assisting the school librarian. The woman who hired her said that after she had "started from the bottom" as a matron she would get the librarian assistant's job. Ten years had passed since then, and she had forgotten about the library job.

At first, working in the locker room seemed detestable, dirty work. The girls were careless—they littered the floor with papers with lipstick blotted on them, left the showers running, threw their towels on the floor and left smelly, moldy lunches in unoccupied lockers. But, soon, she worked without thinking about the undesirability of her job.

It was ninth period. Soon the girls would be through with the shower room, and she could go in and clean it with the strong disinfectant the school supplied.

She filled her bucket with hot water, added the disinfectant, and went into the shower room. In the far corner one of the showers was running. She decided to turn it off when she scrubbed over to that corner. She got down on her hands and knees with a grunt, grabbed her stiff-bristled scrub brush and began to scrub the white tile floor in circular motions.

The sound of the running shower and the sight of her hand moving in dark circular motions against the tile floor gave her a faint, sick feeling. And distinct memories swarmed back.

She had been in the class of 1960—a “special” class because in her junior year she was integrated into the all-white Jefferson Davis High.

The first few days of school, only those who really hated her had enough nerve to call her names and try to humiliate her. After that nothing much happened. She was just getting settled in a false sense of security and well being when it happened.

She was hurrying out of gym class after a rough workout of exercises and was trying to get into the locker room quickly, so she could get showered and to her next class as soon as possible. Inside the locker room there seemed to be something funny in the air, maybe suspense, like something big was going to happen, but she dismissed it as nothing, undressed and headed for the showers.

Going around the corner to the shower room, she met a big, muscular white girl blocking the door.

“Excuse me, please,” she said, “I’ve got to hurry.”

The girl, one who had spilled soup on her the day before, didn’t move.

“I’d like to get to the shower room, and you’re blocking the door, so would you please let me by?” She tried to be as polite as she could. Time was passing quickly, and the bell was going to ring in ten minutes.

The girl moved her leg and there was enough room for her to squeeze by.

She stepped into the shower room and suddenly fell flat on the wet floor. Two other girls, inside the door, had tripped her.

“You dirty nigger,” one half screamed, “we’re going to fix you good—who do you think you are, intruding in our school? You’re the wrong color, and you’re going to suffer for it!”

She tried to get up, but the floor was too slippery, and it was too late to get away from them. They kicked, scratched, bit and slapped her around, beating her mercilessly. All the while the first girl kept muttering, “You dirty nigger.”

The last thing she remembered hearing before blacking out was the sound of a running shower, left on by some careless girl. The last thing she remembered seeing was her dark hand against the white tile of the wet floor.

JANAAN KOONS, twelfth grade, Glenbrook H. S., Northbrook
Susan Smykal, teacher.

AND A GOOD TIME WAS HAD BY ALL

Tonight finds my social skills, *savoir faire*, and sophistication put to their most rigorous test since the time I ripped my date’s

dress at the Christmas dance. You see, this guy with whom I worked this summer has fixed me up with his sister, who is a sophomore in college, and who will probably be pretty hard to keep up with, if you know what I mean. My working buddy has written her nothing but the most glowing reports about me, and consequently she is kind of warm for a date over Thanksgiving. I figure that tonight will be a good experience for future years and, since I don't know this girl from Brigitte Bardot, I've got nothing to lose but a few dollars and my adolescent pride. So, I figure, what the hell, I might as well give it the old college try.

Now I am told that this girl goes to Bennington, in Vermont, which of course impresses me no end, as I know how much a year at Bennington is worth. And since this kid goes to Bennington, I figure she will at least be smart, if nothing else. But my matchmaking friend assures me that she is pretty nice, and I have high hopes of her not being a New England Miss Prim type with nothing to show the fellows but her superior intellect.

The event to which I am taking her is a jazz concert at an auditorium at Northwestern. The attraction is Ahmad Jamal. I happen to go slightly wild over Young Ahmad the Terrible, and so, even if the girl is a dog, I will have his music to salve my feelings of an evening wasted. And in the event that this girl does not particularly care for Ahmad's music, she will simply have to bear with me to the most bitter end, as I have nothing but the deepest affection for his work.

As transportation for the evening, I have gained the use of my father's red Thunderbird, which I feel makes a slightly better impression on a girl than the '55 Ford of my ownership. Being a one-seat sports car, the 'Bird is a decidedly moral vehicle, but I figure that, since I am a mere high schooler and she a college sophomore, I would be wise to concentrate on making the best impression possible and to forget any errant attempts at driveway amour.

So now I am on the way over to her house and am really looking forward to this whole thing quite a bit. I am pretty well-dressed, and I am figuring that there is no way I can make a bad impression on this girl, unless I really put my foot in it, which I am sure I won't do. And so, brimming with confidence and sophistication and any number of stock remarks, I arrive at her house, which, I might add, is in a very wealthy neighborhood in south Highland Park.

My working buddy greets me at the door; his sister will be only a few minutes getting ready. It is good to talk once again

with my friend, although we have to clean up our summer language a bit, as his parents are in the next room. I am introduced to the parents, and the father offers me a drink, which I, of course, tastefully refuse. The father has been drinking a bit himself and is pretty cordial and can't seem to understand that I am not in college, which is perfectly all right with me. I get the general impression that the family is pretty high class, and my hopes for this girl are getting higher by the minute.

But now the expected moment has finally arrived, the moment in which I get the first glimpse of my date in the flesh, so to speak. My working buddy introduces us, and right away I begin thinking that he is perhaps the lowest guy on this earth for fixing me up with a thing like his sister. Right now I am experiencing the biggest let-down of my life, and am thinking that this guy I call friend is someone sent to punish me for my sins.

This girl is really nice, nice like leprosy or lice or malnutrition is nice. Words cannot describe her, she is so bad. I see now why her father drinks. Her name is Bonnie, but it seems you'd be more likely to name her Elsie or Futility or Liability or something equally indicative of her charm and manner.

Her face is like something out of a Charles Addams cartoon, only she has glasses with lenses that must be a half-inch thick and teeth the color of beautiful golden corn. At first guess, I would say her measurements are 20-20-20, although I could be wrong, as I think she is wearing falsies. Now all this might not be so bad if she were not a few inches taller than I am. This is a little startling at first, but I suppose I'll get used to it as the evening drags on.

I help her on with her coat, and we go on out to the car after bidding fond farewell to my ex-buddy and his drinking father. I am afraid that this girl will not fit so well in my smart little 'Bird; her shapely knees may be hitting her pretty little chin unless I move the seat back farther, in which case I will hardly be able to reach the gas pedal. But, mannerly lad that I am, I move the seat back, so that now her knees will hit her chin only when we go over a bump. I am too stunned by the shock of meeting this devastating woman to say much of anything, and so our ride to NU is silent, save for the loud noises she makes when blowing her nose.

We arrive at the auditorium and walk in. I can feel everyone's eyes on this girl and me, and I am hoping that there is no one here I know. We slip conspicuously into two seats near the back; unobtrusive is one thing this girl is not. Pretty soon the music starts, and I almost forget my sorry plight until some wiseguy

sitting behind us asks Bonnie to remove her hat. Well, she isn't wearing any hat, which kind of embarrasses everyone concerned, and I decide to give it up and suggest we leave and go out for something to eat. She graciously accepts my offer, and we exit, conspicuously, in the midst of "Love for Sale," which is one of my favorites, but what can you do?

I decide to take her to Danny's, which is the kind of place with all its class in the men's room and where I wouldn't have the heart to take anyone but my current companion. Danny's happens to be pretty dark, which is the main reason that I take her to Danny's, as I am hoping the darkness will maybe obscure her somewhat, so that it may be possible for me to eat while looking her way.

I order our food and try some futile attempts at conversation. But remarks like "Do you feel well?" or "How soon do you have to be home?" don't provoke too much talk on the part of my ravishing beauty, and silence prevails until the end of our repast.

So I am now coming down the home stretch, going about thirty miles over the speed limit to get this girl back home to her loving father, who will no doubt be glad to have her back so soon. We have only been gone about an hour and a half, but this kid has a way of turning moments into endless eternities, and I cannot free myself from her charming presence any too soon. But we finally make it back to her house, and I fight the overwhelming desire to jump over the car's hood in my zeal to hasten the exit of my precious sweet.

We reach her front door, and, feeling that a few kind and gentle words of good bye—or maybe good riddance—are in order, I tell her how much I enjoyed it and all that. Her resonant baritone then coos a sweet good night, and her svelte figure slips from my luckless life into her house, leaving me with a deep hatred for my ex-buddy and a well-based suspicion of all young things from Bennington.

TOM KLUG, twelfth grade, Glenbrook H. S., Northbrook
Jane Britton, teacher

HOW TO GET AHEAD

Children love to listen to stories about their elders, when they were children; to stretch their imagination to the conception of a traditionary great-uncle or grandame, whom they never saw.

Charles Lamb's "Dream Children—A Reverie"

The above passage reminds me of two of my own ancestors that I liked to think about when I was younger. They were the

Hoffmanns, who for two generations carried out their duties as executioners at Frankfurt, Germany.

It is interesting to imagine how the father might have taught his son the elements of this noble profession. The boy would first be introduced to the trade at the age of six by his father, who would give him a small axe for his birthday.

"Tomorrow you may come and watch me at work," the father would say, "and then I will show you how to use the axe properly."

The next day the boy would go to see his father, a tall, striking figure in his top-hat, black mask, and white gloves, as he gracefully and skillfully handled the instrument of his profession. After that the lesson would begin.

"The stance is very important," the father would say to the boy. "You must stand with your feet well apart and firmly placed, so you will not lose your balance from the force of the blow. If you lose your balance, you will not be able to strike properly, and it may be necessary to use more than one blow. That is the mark of a poorly-trained executioner.

"After you have learned the stance, the grip is important. You must grasp the axe-handle firmly near the end. Some teachers tell you to interlock the fingers, but that is unnecessary and old-fashioned.

"Finally you must learn the correct swing. You raise the axe straight over your head and back just a little, but not so far that you hit yourself in the back. That isn't good for the axe. Then you must bring the axe down with all your strength and strike the neck with a descending blow. As I said before, you must sever the neck the first time."

At this point, the boy would grow bored hearing things that he knew already. Before he could run out to practice what he had learned, however, the father would give him a few instructions.

"Now that you have an axe of your own," he would say, "you will be expected to take good care of it. You must keep the axe clean and well sharpened. You must clean the block every day and file it smooth so it will fit properly around your victims' necks. Finally, you must wash the basket each day until there are no stains left. A man is known by the cleanliness of his tools. If you fail to fulfill any of these duties, I shall rap you on the knuckles with an axe-handle.

"One more thing: you must always dress properly. Your mask must be straight, and your gloves must be spotless. You must remove all bloodstains from your clothes. And remember always to treat your victims with utmost courtesy. It is extremely impor-

tant to establish a good psychological relationship, so you must be a gentleman at all times."

As the boy would run outside eagerly, anxious to test his new knowledge, the father would smile, knowing that soon his son would be heading for success.

ERIK ZIMMERMAN, twelfth grade,
Oak Park and River Forest H. S.
Mildred Linden, teacher

FOR THE GLORY OF MANKIND

Somewhere in the cold, black nothingness of which the Other World is composed, there stands an inn. It is a large, friendly inn, brightly lit by the fire which crackles cheerfully in the hearth. Here the heroes of all the ages of mankind gather to tell their tales of great deeds and great battles, to sing of the valor of their comrades, and to drink to the continuing Glory of the Human Race.

At a table in a corner of the inn sit three men. The first is a dark young Italian, dressed in the short tunic and armor which signify membership in a Roman legion. His sparkling black eyes laugh as he speaks.

"My name is Marcus. I died on a battlefield in Gaul. I was young when I died; my life was cut short before I was able to live it. Yet I do not weep for myself, for I died in a good cause. It was through the deaths of my comrades and me that the Roman Empire united the world. I died for the Unity of Mankind."

All raise their glasses to the Unity of Mankind.

The second man is dressed in the untarnished armor of a knight of the Crusades. There are purpose and resolution in his steel-blue eyes.

"My name is Michael. I died in the Holy Land. I, too, died in a good cause, in the attempt to rescue the Holy Land from pagans. I died for the Salvation of Mankind."

All raise their glasses to the Salvation of Mankind.

The third man is dressed in the khaki uniform of an American Army sergeant of the Twentieth Century. His brown eyes reflect smug satisfaction.

"My name is Mack. I died fighting the Nazis in Germany. I died in a good cause; I died for the Emancipation of Mankind."

All raise their glasses to the Emancipation of Mankind. All save one.

A fourth man has entered the inn and seated himself at the table. He does not lift his glass with the rest. Instead, he sits staring blankly at the table in front of him, staring with the dead, empty eyes of one who no longer knows laughter, purpose, or satisfaction. His uniform is a drab gray, without insignia, and unlike any other in the vast hall. All shudder as his hollow voice sounds dully through the inn.

"My name is Man. I died fighting myself on the barren battlefields of War. My unity, my salvation, my emancipation are meaningless now; I died for no cause."

The great hall is silent; no glass is lifted; no song is sung. A chill wind sweeps thorough the inn, and the fire smolders and dies, never to be rekindled. The cold darkness of the Other World closes in, hiding the crumbling skeletons strewn over the chairs and tables, last remnants of the Glory of Mankind.

AARON BLOCH, twelfth grade, Niles Twp. H. S.
Parepa Rice, teacher

HONORABLE MENTION

Aurora: (West Senior High School) "After Reading Antigone," by Mary Maudsley, tenth grade (Caroline Drummond, teacher).

Carlinville: (Carlinville Community High School) "What a Game!" by John Sweet, eleventh grade (Mary Hoyt Stoddard, teacher).

Chicago: (Hyde Park High School) "The Escort," by Jack Brodnax, eleventh grade (Alta Farr, teacher); (Taft High School) "New Shoes, New Shoes," by Diane Koerner, eleventh grade (Rita Ellen Hansen, teacher).

Chicago Heights: (Bloom Township High School) "The Log," by William Stock, twelfth grade (William A. Shroyer, teacher).

Collinsville: (Collinsville High School) "How I Spent Thanksgiving," by James Turner, ninth grade; "Man's Best Friend," by Kandis Kimmel, ninth grade (Roberta Baldrige, teacher).

Des Plaines-Park Ridge: (Maine West High School) "An Introduction to Prejudice," by Donna Cadwallader, tenth grade (Ann Lauterbach, teacher); (Maine Township High School) "I'll Never Smile Again," by Kathy Forster, ninth grade (Pauline Yates, teacher).

Elgin: (Elgin High School) "Stunned," by Bob Miller, twelfth grade (Enid M. Burns, teacher).

- Elmhurst: (York Community High School) "The West Side Story' Hit in Chicago," by Glending Olson, twelfth grade (Eleanor A. Davis, teacher).
- Evanston: (Evanston Township High School) "Humpty Dumpty," by Larry Berg, twelfth grade (Karen Kuehner, teacher); "On Playing Post Office," by Marcia Goelz, ninth grade (Leslee Bishop, teacher); "The Scientist Tells Me," by Gail Thain, twelfth grade (Barbara Pannwitt, teacher); "The Lake," by Richard W. Couch, twelfth grade; "One Year and a Whole Lifetime," by Patricia Snook, twelfth grade (Charlotte Whittaker, teacher).
- Genoa-Kingston: (Genoa-Kingston Community Unit High School) "A Seaman's Sympathizer," by Paul Harmon, twelfth grade (Gladys Wibking, teacher).
- Harvard: (Harvard High School) "Track Tension," by Bill Wilke, ninth grade (Ruth Ely, teacher).
- Jacksonville: (Jacksonville High School) "Realization," by Minta Way, ninth grade (Maurine Self, teacher).
- LaGrange: (Lyons Township High School) "The Briar and the Rose," by Lee Forest, twelfth grade (Kay Keefe, teacher).
- Lemont: (Lemont Township High School) "The Mistake," by Margie Yantz, twelfth grade (Roy Mecklenburg, teacher).
- Moline: (Moline Senior High School) "So Fortunate. . .," by Adena Peterson, eleventh grade (DeWayne Roush, teacher).
- Normal: (University High School) "Good Sir, Why Do You Start?" by Richard Larsen, twelfth grade (Ruth Stroud, teacher).
- Northbrook: (Glenbrook High School) "Hustler," by Tom Klug, twelfth grade (Jane Britton, teacher); "Worlds Ad Infinitum," by Victoria Randall, ninth grade (Charles B. Ruggless, teacher); "Miss Creagh," by Janaan Koons, twelfth grade (Susan Smykal, teacher); "The Rains," by Ruth Ann Kuchel, ninth grade (Charles B. Ruggless, teacher).
- Oak Park and River Forest: (Oak Park and River Forest High School) "King of the Monkeys," by Garry Hallen, twelfth grade (Mildred Linden, teacher); "A Country Village," by David Ross, twelfth grade (Helen Barclay, teacher); "Educated Attitudes," by Thomas Morawetz, twelfth grade (Helen Barclay, teacher); "An Accident—I Guess," by Charles Kuhlman, twelfth grade; "The Desert at Night," by Robert King, twelfth grade (Nina Grace Smith, teacher).

- Olney: (East Richland High School) "Autobiography," by George Highsmith, twelfth grade; "The Lagoon," by Carol Smith, twelfth grade; "A Troubled Morning," by Charles Stevenson, twelfth grade; "The Fifth Horseman," by Tom Fite, twelfth grade (Margaret Griffin, teacher).
- Peoria: (Peoria High School) "The Arthurian Anachronism," by Susan Cooley, twelfth grade (Emily E. Rice, teacher).
- Petersburg: (Petersburg High School) "My Home at Christmas," by Shiryl Brauer, twelfth grade (Mina Terry, teacher).
- Rantoul: (Eater Junior High School) "Autumn Storm," by Elizabeth Bailey, seventh grade (Mary Clifford, teacher).
- Richwoods: (Richwoods Community High School) "A Silver Star," by Janet Ginsburg, eleventh grade (Ann Bodine, teacher).
- Rochelle: (Rochelle Township High School) "The Storm," by Jan Rewerts, twelfth grade (Rosalia Stotmeister, teacher).
- Rockford: (East High School) "The Second Coming," by Jerry Forberg, twelfth grade; "Kathie," by Cathy Friedman, twelfth grade; "And It's Almost Over," by Marlene Gustofson, twelfth grade (Adele Johnson, teacher).
- Rock Island: (Rock Island High School) "Alms for the Poor," by Joel Harris, eleventh grade (Carolyn Pierson Walker, teacher).
- Skokie: (Niles Township High School) "The Liars," by Bill Chaitkin, twelfth grade (Priscilla Baker, teacher).
- Streator: (Streator Township High School) "Surgery," by Keith Henrichs, tenth grade (Lucille M. Tkach, teacher).
- Urbana: (Urbana High School) "Market Day in Schrobhausen," by Janice St. Clair, twelfth grade (Marien Seward, teacher); "My Dad," by Jean St. Clair, tenth grade (Viola Gribanovsky, teacher).

